

Democrats Flip for Labor Union Bosses

Retreat on Workers Rights, Retreat on Privacy Protection, Retreat on Liberty

Today, the House will consider H.R. 800, “The Employee Free Choice Act,” which jeopardizes the rights of 140 million American workers to privately decide whether to unionize.

The bill, introduced by Rep. George Miller (D-CA), strips individual workers of their right to vote anonymously when deciding to form a union and has been called “[exquisitely Orwellian](#)” by the [San Francisco Examiner](#). Stripping individuals of their sacred privacy rights will subject workers to coercion and abuse. What is more fundamental to American Democracy than the secret ballot election? This bill doesn’t help workers, it further empowers labor bosses.

In their own words...

Democrat Leaders on secret Ballots

Speaker Pelosi in 1995:

“...when the National Labor Relations Act became law, it stood for the fundamental proposition that representatives of working men and women should be exclusively responsible to those they represent.”

(Source: “Teamwork for Employees and Managers Act of 1995,” September 27, 1995, Congressional Record Page H9535)

Majority Leader Hoyer in 2001:

“Members on both sides of the aisle have spoken eloquently and sincerely about safeguarding our most cherished democratic right: the right to vote and to have one's vote counted...for who among us would accept election reform that fails to ensure the privacy and independence of millions of eligible voters at the ballot box? None of us, I would argue, because the right to exercise the franchise under conditions that afford privacy and independence is intimately American and bound up in what it means to be a free and equal citizen in a democratic society.”

(Source: “Motion to Instruct Conferees on H.R. 3295, Help America Vote Act of 2001,” July 9, 2002, Congressional Record Page H4389)

Majority Leader Hoyer in 1995:

The bill being debated at the time is “unnecessary and unwise...[because] it undermines the right of employees to select their own representatives in employer-employee bargaining situations.”

(Source: "Teamwork for Employees and Managers Act of 1995," September 27, 1995, Congressional Record Page H9532)

Education and Labor Chairman George Miller in 1995:

"The National Labor Relations Act was designed to make companies more productive and efficient by ensuring employees independence and freedom, and the National Labor Relations Act is working."

"[When] employees lose that independent voice...we now have an adversarial system where once again we are dictating top-down from the employer to the lineworkers what is best for them."

(Source for each: "Teamwork for Employees and Managers Act of 1995," September 27, 1995, Congressional Record Page H9526)

Education and Labor Chairman George Miller in 2001:

*"We understand that the secret ballot is allowed for, but not required by Mexican labor law. However, we feel that **the secret ballot is absolutely necessary in order to ensure workers are not intimidated** into voting for a union they may otherwise not choose."*

(Source: 8/29/2001 2001 Letter sent by Rep. Miller and fifteen other Democratic members of Congress to Mexican Officials)

How they campaigned?

"We are committed to immediate change to lead this country in a new direction, to put an end to business as usual, and to make certain this nation's leaders serve the people's interests, not special interests. Our responsibility to our constituents and to our nation is to represent all of the people, not just the powerful."

(Source: *A New Direction for America*; proposed by House Democrats in the 109th Congress)

Are these the people they represent?

- 87 percent of Americans said that a federally supervised, private ballot election right should be retained by workers when deciding on union membership.

(Source: January 2007 poll conducted by McLaughlin & Associates)

- 71 percent of union members agreed that the current secret-ballot process is fair. 78 percent of union members said that Congress should keep the existing secret ballot election process in place and not replace it with another process.

(Source: 7/2004 Zogby International Survey)

Or are THESE the people they represent?

"With union membership slipping, the AFL-CIO ran a full-page newspaper ad on Sunday in support of the bill. It plans a major publicity campaign with Change to Win and other groups. 'We don't run ads a lot,' said AFL-CIO spokeswoman Lane Windham. 'It's

indicative of how important this is.””

(Source: Reuters, 2/5/07)

“There's no reason to subject the workers to an election...”

(Labor Union UNITE-HERE President Bruce Raynor, quoted in Steven Greenhouse, “Labor Turns to a Pivotal Organizing Drive,” *The New York Times*, May 31, 2003.)

Organized labor gave more than half a billion in contributions to Democratic candidates since 1994.

(Source: Center for Responsive Politics)

In the 2005-2006 election cycle, Organized Labor gave more than \$51 million in hard dollar PAC contributions to Democrats.

(Source: Political Money Line)

Actions speak louder than words.